



Historical Commission  
Fitchburg City Hall - 718 Main Street - Fitchburg, MA 01420

## Minutes

6:00 PM Thursday July 28, 2016

Meeting at Fitchburg Wallace Library, 610 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor meeting room

Members of FHC present: Sam Blair, Keith Chenot, Ellen Di Geronimo, Don Ostrowski, Susan Roetzer, Steve Twining

1. Meeting Minutes for June 30, 2016 approved with minor corrections.

2. *Update on plans to renovate City Hall.* Susan reported that the city administration, citing excessive cost to renovate, is leaning toward selling City Hall to a private developer. Discussion followed noting the findings of the City Hall study committee to retain the structure, its importance to Main Street's character, its visual presence at the bend of Main Street, and its strong historic significance. The Historical Commission noted that recent sales of public buildings to developers have not been successful in achieving the intended results, for example, the first sale of the Academy School building that resulted in neglect and partial demolition. From this, a recommendation was made that a draft deed preservation restriction be prepared and presented to city administration. Keith will research preservation restrictions. Susan will re-contact members of the City Hall study committee for their current input on City Hall's future. City Hall is still on Preservation Massachusetts' list of Most Endangered Historic Resources.

2a. Motion approved for the FHC to nominate the Superior Court Building to the Preservation Massachusetts Most Endangered Historic Resources Listing. Ellen and Keith will work on the nomination, which is due August 15.

3. *Saving the building at 1089 Franklin Street follow-up.* FHC submitted a letter to the developer that we would support their effort to retain and partially restore the structure. Steve reported that measures have been taken to protect the structure from future weather damage. Ellen will contact Peter Bovenzi, the developer, to get an update.

4. *Public presentation October 19<sup>th</sup> for Monument Park Historic District.* Ellen will check the Fitchburg Public calendar and the availability of the Library auditorium/meeting rooms for the event. The City of Salem was discussed as a model of urban revitalization through historic preservation. Ellen will check with Salem historical preservation for a possible speaker. A walking tour, historic and current images, and preservation advocacy were discussed. We should begin advertising in September. We need to compile a guest list. Contact Mary Jo Bohart as part of community development.

5. *Progress on updating the FHC Web Site (including current list of commission board members).* Ellen will contact Trevor and put him in touch with Don.

6. *Proposed creation of a group email address (perhaps using Google Groups) for the commission. Should FHC members be using a Fitchburg.gov e-mail address instead of their*

*personal e-mail address for FHC business?* See discussion concerning no. 5 above.

*7. Asking the Mayor's office to nominate alternate members so as to ensure the attendance of a quorum at Commission meetings.* Tabled for 4 to 5 months since the reason for possibly proposing alternate member (i.e., achieving a quorum) has not been necessary.